

Finally, the Senate ISTE A bill extends the current excise tax exemption for an important Illinois product—corn-based, renewable ethanol fuel—to 2007. Farmers and the ethanol industry must be able to plan for the future. Extending the incentive will allow them to do so.

Mr. President, the Senate's action on ISTE A sets the stage for Congress to uphold its obligation to reauthorize these vitally important transportation programs before they expire again later this spring. I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that our nation's transportation needs are properly met.●

REMEMBERING SENATOR ABRAHAM RIBICOFF

● Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. President, I want to take this opportunity to talk about a man who served the people of Connecticut and America with dignity, honor and great style. Abraham Ribicoff spent most of his life in the public service. Before he became a Senator in 1962, he was a Congressman, the Governor of Connecticut, and the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare in the Kennedy administration. He was a true leader in the Senate on many issues and his style of leadership and public service will be greatly missed.

During his time in the Senate, Senator Ribicoff served on the Government Operations Committee, which was renamed the Governmental Affairs Committee during his tenure. He began his service on the committee on February 25, 1963 and served as Chairman from 1977 to 1980.

As Chairman, Senator Ribicoff oversaw the passage of many initiatives we now take for granted in the government. One such bill was the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, which was the first substantive reform of the Federal civil service in nearly 100 years. He also helped to enact the Ethics in Government Act, which mandates public disclosure for high-ranking officials in the three branches of the Federal Government. He navigated to passage legislation that created Inspectors General in each of the major federal agencies to serve as public watchdogs to combat waste, fraud and abuse in federal programs.

During his tenure as Chairman of the Committee, Senator Ribicoff also oversaw the implementation of legislation that established a permanent, Cabinet-level Department of Energy in the executive branch. By doing so, all of the federal government's major energy programs were brought together in one place, including those programs relating to economic regulation of energy supply systems. He also worked closely with Senator GLENN to help enact the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act, which established a more effective framework for international cooperation to meet the energy needs of nations. It also ensured that the world-

wide development of peaceful nuclear activities and the export by any nation of nuclear materials, equipment, and nuclear technology intended for the use in peaceful nuclear activities did not contribute to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

An area in which Senator Ribicoff and I shared a great interest is that of federal regulation and how to make it more effective, and at the same time, less burdensome. On July 26, 1975, Senate Resolution 71, introduced by Senator Ribicoff and Senator GLENN, was agreed to by the Committee. This resolution authorized a study of Federal regulatory agencies to be undertaken jointly by the Committee on Commerce and the Committee on Government Operations. The first two of these studies which the Committee on Government Operations compiled were entitled "Study on Federal Regulation: The Regulatory Appointment Process," and "Study on Federal Regulation: Congressional Oversight of Executive Agencies." These two studies set the groundwork for the regulatory reform work that the committee undertook at that time and which we continue to pursue today.

I want to acknowledge Senator Ribicoff for having the foresight, some twenty years ago, to examine the regulatory process. As I have found out this is not an easy task, but well worth the effort. While Senator Ribicoff's leadership and public service will be greatly missed, it is my hope that we can carry on his pioneering work and establish a better and smarter regulatory process.●

DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP BENEFITS AND OBLIGATIONS ACT OF 1998

● Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I ask that the text of S. 1636, a bill to provide benefits to domestic partners of Federal employees, be printed in the RECORD.

The text of the bill follows:

S. 1636

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act of 1998".

SEC. 2. BENEFITS TO DOMESTIC PARTNERS OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—A domestic partner of an employee shall be entitled to benefits available to and obligations imposed upon a spouse of an employee.

(b) CERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY.—In order to obtain benefits under this Act, an employee shall file an affidavit of eligibility for benefits with the Office of Personnel Management certifying that the employee and the domestic partner of the employee—

- (1) are each other's sole domestic partner and intend to remain so indefinitely;
- (2) have a common residence, and intend to continue the arrangement;
- (3) are at least 18 years of age and mentally competent to consent to contract;
- (4) share responsibility for a significant measure of each other's common welfare and financial obligations;
- (5) are not married to or domestic partners with anyone else;

(6) understand that willful falsification of information within the affidavit may lead to disciplinary action, including termination of employment, and the recovery of the cost of benefits received related to such falsification; and

(7) are same sex domestic partners, and not related in a way that, if the 2 were of opposite sex, would prohibit legal marriage in the State in which they reside.

(c) DISSOLUTION OF PARTNERSHIP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—An employee or domestic partner of an employee who obtains benefits under this Act shall file a statement of dissolution of the domestic partnership with the Office of Personnel Management not later than 30 days after the death of the employee or the domestic partner or the date of dissolution of the domestic partnership.

(2) DEATH OF EMPLOYEE.—In a case in which an employee dies, the domestic partner of the employee at the time of death shall be deemed a spouse of the employee for the purpose of receiving benefits under this Act.

(3) OTHER DISSOLUTION OF PARTNERSHIP.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In a case in which a domestic partnership dissolves by a method other than death of the employee or domestic partner of the employee, any benefits received by the domestic partner as a result of this Act shall terminate.

(B) EXCEPTION.—In a case in which a domestic partnership dissolves by a method other than death of the employee or domestic partner of the employee, any health benefits received by the domestic partner as a result of this Act shall continue for a period of 60 days after the date of the dissolution of the partnership. The domestic partner shall pay for such benefits in the same manner that a former spouse would pay for such benefits under section 8905a of title 5, United States Code.

(d) SUBSEQUENT PARTNERSHIPS.—If an employee files a statement of dissolution of partnership under subsection (c)(1), the employee may file a certification of eligibility under subsection (b) relating to another partner—

(1) not earlier than 180 days after the date of filing such statement of dissolution, if such dissolution did not result from the death of a partner; or

(2) on any date after the filing of such statement of dissolution, if such dissolution resulted from the death of a partner.

(e) CONFIDENTIALITY.—Any information submitted to the Office of Personnel Management under subsection (b) shall be used solely for the purpose of certifying an individual's eligibility for benefits under subsection (a).

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

(1) DOMESTIC PARTNER.—The term "domestic partner" means an adult person living with, but not married to, another adult person in a committed, intimate relationship.

(2) BENEFITS.—The term "benefits" means—

(A) any benefit under the civil service retirement system under chapter 83 of title 5, United States Code, including any benefit from participation in the thrift savings plan under subchapter III of chapter 84 of such title;

(B) any benefit under the Federal employees' retirement system under chapter 84 of title 5, United States Code;

(C) life insurance benefits under chapter 87 of title 5, United States Code;

(D) health insurance benefits under chapter 89 of title 5, United States Code; and

(E) compensation for work injuries under chapter 81 of title 5, United States Code.

(3) EMPLOYEE.—

(A) With respect to Civil Service Retirement, the term "employee" shall have the